

# What Works Clearinghouse



## Read Well

### Program description

*Read Well* is a research-based reading curriculum designed to improve student literacy. This program includes explicit, systematic instruction in English decoding, sustained practice of decoding skills and fluency, and instruction in vocabulary and

concepts presented in text. It also provides support for English language learner (ELL) students through scaffolded lesson instruction and oral language priming activities.

### Research

One study of *Read Well* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards with reservations. This study, which included

more than 30 ELL elementary school students from five schools in central Texas, examined results on students' reading achievement.<sup>1</sup>

### Effectiveness

*Read Well* was found to have potentially positive effects on reading achievement of elementary school English language learners.

	Reading achievement	Mathematics achievement	English language development
Rating of effectiveness	Potentially positive	Not reported	Not reported
Improvement index <sup>2</sup>	Average: +10 percentile points Range: 0 to +16 percentile points	Not reported	Not reported

1. The evidence presented in this report is based on the available research. Findings and conclusions may change as new research becomes available.

2. These numbers show the average and the range of improvement indices for all findings across the study.

## Additional program information

### Developer and contact

*Read Well* was developed by Sopris West Educational Services. Address: Sopris West, 4093 Specialty Place, Longmont, CO 80504. Email: customerservice@sopriswest.com. Web: <http://store.cambiumlearning.com/ProgramPage.aspx?parentId=019005451&functionID=0090000008&pID=Read%20Well&site=sw>. Telephone: (303) 651-2829 or (800) 547-6747.

### Scope of use

According to the developer, *Read Well* has been implemented in various regions of the country with kindergarten and first-grade regular education students and English language learners.

### Teaching

The *Read Well* program involves explicit, systematic instruction in English language decoding, sustained practice of skills in decodable text, and frequent opportunities to discuss vocabulary and concepts presented in the text. Reading and writing skills include story maps, story retells, and guided reports. A key feature of *Read Well* is the scaffolding of students' reading skills by the teacher through the use of teacher/student "duets" that combine teacher-read and student-read text. As student skills (and motivation) increase, the amount of

teacher-read text decreases and the student is given greater independence.

The *Read Well* instructor package includes all teacher materials and one set of student materials. A professional development program is available for teachers interested in using the curriculum. According to the developers, these sessions should also provide teachers with the reading strategies on which the program focuses. In addition to the two day professional development sessions, the developer strongly recommends follow-up training and coaching.

### Cost

The instructor package for kindergarten students costs \$999.95. The student package costs \$1,499.95 for 24 students and \$369.95 for 6 students. Materials in the instructor and student packages are available for individual purchase at prices ranging from \$16.95 to \$249.00. Student materials are available in plain or slanted text.

The Instructor Package for first grade students costs \$999.95, and cost for the Student Package is \$1,699.95 for 24 students and \$479.95 for 6 students. Materials in the Instructor and Student Package are available for individual purchase at prices ranging from \$16.95 to \$249.00. Student materials are available in plain or slanted text.

## Research

One study (Denton, Anthony, Parker, & Hasbrouck, 2004) reviewed by the WWC investigated the effects of *Read Well* on an English language learner sample. This study was a randomized controlled trial with differential attrition that met the WWC evidence standards with reservations. The part of the

study that examined *Read Well* included 33 participants. The intervention group received English language pull-out tutoring during the school day in addition to their regular English instruction. The control students received only their regular English instruction.

## Effectiveness

### Findings

The WWC review of ELL addresses student outcomes in three domains: reading achievement, mathematics achievement, and English language development.

*Reading achievement.* Denton and colleagues reported a statistically significant difference favoring the intervention group on one of three measures (Woodcock Reading Master Tests—Revised: Word Identification). The WWC did not confirm

## Effectiveness *(continued)*

the statistically significant finding, but found the difference favoring the intervention group large enough to be considered substantively important by WWC standards.<sup>3</sup>

### Rating of effectiveness

The WWC rates interventions as positive, potentially positive, mixed, no discernible effects, potentially negative, or negative.

The rating of effectiveness takes into account four factors: the quality of the research design, the statistical significance of the findings (as calculated by the WWC<sup>3</sup>), the size of the difference between participants in the intervention and the comparison conditions, and the consistency in findings across studies (see the [WWC Intervention Rating Scheme](#)).

## The WWC found *Read Well* to have potentially positive effects on reading achievement

### Improvement index

For each outcome domain, the WWC translated the average effect size into an improvement index (see the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#)). This improvement index represents the difference between the percentile rank of the average student in the intervention condition versus the percentile rank of the average student in the comparison condition. Unlike the rating of effectiveness, the improvement index is entirely based on the size of the effect, regardless of the statistical significance of the effect, the study design, or the analysis. The improvement index can take on values between -50 and +50,

with positive numbers denoting favorable results. The average improvement index for reading achievement is +10 percentile points, with a range of 0 to +16 percentile points across findings.

### Summary

The WWC reviewed one study on the effects of *Read Well* on ELL students, which met WWC standards with reservations. The study, which used a randomized controlled trial design and had differential attrition, assessed elementary ELL students' reading achievement. The WWC rated the program as having potentially positive effects on the reading domain.

## References

### Met WWC evidence standards with reservations

Denton, C. A., Anthony, J. L., Parker, R., & Hasbrouck, J. E. (2004). Effects of two tutoring programs on the English reading development of Spanish-English bilingual students. *The Elementary School Journal*, 104(4), 289–305.

### Additional source:

Denton, C. A. (2000). The efficacy of two English interventions in a bilingual education program. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 61(11), 4325A. (UMI No. 9994233).

**For more information about specific studies and WWC calculations, please see the [WWC Read Well Technical Appendices](#).**

<sup>3</sup> The level of statistical significance was calculated by the WWC, and where necessary, corrects for clustering within classrooms or schools and for multiple comparisons. For an explanation see the [WWC Tutorial on Mismatch](#). See the [Technical Details of WWC-Conducted Computations](#) for the formulas the WWC used to calculate the statistical significance. In the case of *Read Well*, no corrections for clustering or multiple comparisons were needed.